



Science, Culture and National Identity in Francoist Spain, 1939–1959

Edited by
Marició Janué i Miret
Albert Presas i Puig

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PART I

Theory and Methodology



Introduction: The Usefulness of Science and Culture as ‘Nationalization’ Tools in the Early Franco Regime

Marició Janué i Miret and Albert Presas i Puig

This edited volume examines the role of science and culture as tools for building a national identity during the early Franco regime.¹ By the “early Franco’s regime”, we refer to the years from 1939, with the military regime firmly established after the end of the Spanish Civil War (1936–1939), until 1959, when an economic ‘Stabilization Plan’ implied the abandonment of autarkic economic policies and the returning to a more open economic system.² At the level of international politics, this first phase of Franco’s dictatorship is integrated into two clearly

¹This volume is part of the framework of the research project titled ‘Science, culture, and nation in Spain: from the 1898 “disaster” to the end of Franco’s Dictatorship’ FFI-HAR 2016-75559 (AEI/FEDER,UE), which has also made its funding possible. The results were discussed in the Nexus–UPF research group (<https://www.upf.edu/web/nexus>).

²Riquer (2010).

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differentiated periods: the Second World War (1939–1945), and the consolidation of the Cold War after 1945. However, in relation to Spain, both periods have in common their isolation imposed by Western powers, which was gradually abandoned in the 1950s. This volume, thus, deals with the role that science and culture played in the early Franco regime in the process of definition and implementation of the ideas and policies of *nationalization* in Spain.

While the studies on Franco's regime have emphasized nationalism as one of its most distinctive features, the analysis specifically focused on the nationalization efforts of the regime is limited. The concept of nationalization we are looking at is the complex process of transmitting meanings about the character and relevance of the Spanish nation, namely, ideas, representations, and practices of homogenization linked to the supposedly basic constitutive elements of national identity.³ This book focuses on the discursive and symbolic dimensions of nationalization through science and culture, rather than on the material efforts, which have already received some attention.⁴ In this sense, although we recognize the relevance of material efforts and infrastructures for nationalizing purposes, this volume scrutinizes the role of science and culture in discourses aimed at creating and reaffirming the idea of the Spanish nation. Apart from some very meritorious works on Spanish science and culture,⁵ and studies devoted to the development of the idea of the nation,⁶ the relationship between the two issues has barely been raised.⁷ However, there is enough evidence that science and culture played a role as instruments of nationalization policies and that this is one of the most significant, unexplored aspects of Franco's nationalism.

This edited volume focuses on the aforementioned relationship by exploring four main questions: (1) how the Spanish state used the development in science and culture for the legitimation of the Spanish nation; (2) the ability of science and culture to mobilize state resources in the name of the nation for their own interests; (3) to what extent cultural and

³ Quiroga (2013).

⁴ Pro (2019).

⁵ Sánchez-Ron (2008), Romero de Pablos and Santesmases (2008), Gómez and Canales (2009), Gracia and Ruiz Carnicer (2001).

⁶ Álvarez Junco (2001), Quiroga and Archillés (2013), Moreno Almendral (2014), Michonneau and Núñez Seixas (2014), Alares López (2017).

⁷ An exception, Santana de la Cruz (2009); for engineering Camprubí (2014), for historiography, Prades (2014) and Antolín Hofrichter (2018).

scientific output was determined or affected by the current conceptions of the nation; and (4) what was the influence of the representations and symbols of the nation on the role of scientists and the way they understood their disciplines, as well as their own role.

The contributions in this book are based on the premise that the constitution of the contemporary nation state and the development of science and culture policies are closely interrelated.⁸ The contemporary nation state considers knowledge and science as an engine of wealth generation and social development, which, in turn, will determine the relationship among those with political power and society. Already in the twentieth century, the previous trend towards the organization of science in the sense of building scientific policies at the national as well as the international level was confirmed. Thus, the analysis of cultural diplomacy is an ideal means of exploring the links between cultural and scientific fields and their relationship to international political changes and transformations.⁹ All this will facilitate the promotion of science in its social and political contexts, as well as its instrumentalization, to reinforce the desired idea of nation state. The question of the significance of science and culture for the national identity has become one of the most important topics on the research agenda of the history and sociology of science.¹⁰

Spain, despite the impasses, breakouts, and peculiarities of its history, will not fail to accompany this historical cadence.¹¹ There were initiatives of organization of science, underpinned by different social movements and traditions, all of them participating in the debate on the role of culture and science in shaping the Spanish nation, which aspired to be present in the international policy or intended to be recast under its livelihood. For this reason, it is essential to understand the evolution and interaction of both processes, the role of science and knowledge, and the conceptions about the nation at a fundamental stage of its development and in the light of different political situations.

The development of ideas of nation in the framework of the construction of contemporary nation states has been the subject of study by specialists on nationalism issues for a couple of decades.¹² However, the

⁸ Inkster (2009).

⁹ Niño (2009), Gienow-Hecht and Donfried (2010). For Spain, Delgado Gómez-Escalonilla (1992) and (2014).

¹⁰ Metzler (2000), Kojevnikov (2004).

¹¹ Sanz Menéndez (1997).

¹² Smith (1999).

importance and contribution of the science and culture to their significance have hardly been considered.¹³ At the same time, although the relationship between science and political power has been the subject of numerous studies, its role in consolidating the nation state has not yet been seriously taken into account. The present volume is well aware of the advantages of understanding the close relationship between science and culture, on the one hand, and the state and the nation, on the other, as a dense network of political, social, cultural, and material relations, in a complex interaction that flows multidirectionally.¹⁴

Already existing approaches putting science and culture in the focus of historical research on nation-building ideas warn of the risk of hasty acceptance of categories and use of terms such as *science* and *nation* as given, homogeneous, and static. Science and nation do not always appear as univocal concepts at all times and circumstances.¹⁵ It is, therefore, necessary to consider science and nation as a web of references, and to analyse the social relationships and processes in which they are generated and established. Since the end of the nineteenth century, science and technology have not only described the world but have even built it through their applications, technologies, and goals. Hence, it can be considered that the ‘construction of nature’ and ‘nation-building’ took place simultaneously.¹⁶ In this line, we understand the generation of science and knowledge linked to the great themes of history in general, and they should therefore be considered by historiography in the analysis of nation-building processes.¹⁷ This requires a cultural perspective on the conditions of production and the power and influence of knowledge, such as the one we propose here for the case of Spain.

In 1904, Max Weber argued that scientific knowledge based on the controllable and reproducible method and on free and universal communication, the principle of rationality of which would extend to the whole world, was opposed to the idea of nation, which he associated with diametrically opposed characteristics.¹⁸ The nation would be governed by emotional identifications and cultural factors, an approach that has been

¹³ Exceptions are, among others, Fohrmann (1991), Cañizares-Esguerra (2001), Jessen and Vogel (2002), Krige and Wang (2015).

¹⁴ Hühler (2001).

¹⁵ Pestre (1997).

¹⁶ Haraway (1991).

¹⁷ López Piñero (1992).

¹⁸ Weber (1973).

shared by much of the literature. Just as science, especially modern science, is understood as universal, the nation is conceived as being particular.¹⁹ The investigation of the relationship between these two issues, usually considered separately, responds to the assumption of the innovative research on the idea of nation carried out during the 1990s.²⁰ Moving away from a positivist interpretation of national historical development, and incorporating sociohistorical studies in the formation of nations in nineteenth-century Europe,²¹ those then-new approaches, showed the symbolic character of the nation's construction, based on a society that would rest on a socially constructed idea and tradition. In this way, not only has the same concept of nation been developed but a large number of research topics have also been generated. The nation has come to be seen as a culturally constructed association whose relations will be reaffirmed, staged, stimulated, and symbolized, with its institutionalization in the national state. From this perspective, the analysis of the contribution of science and culture to the construction of the idea of nation and the legitimation of the state, but also how the state favoured the development of science and culture, acquires a special interest. This analysis will benefit from new approaches to cultural history which consider science and nation as cultural phenomena situated in European contemporaneity, related to a specific anti-traditionalism and with utopian moments of national improvement and fullness.²² Scientific work and cultural development depend on institutional arrangements, social relations, cultural traditions, and legitimation processes that are never completely isolated, or fully autonomous.²³

Recent historiography confirms the contribution of science to the formation of a 'national culture'.²⁴ The relationship between nationalist and scientific politics has been considered from the early twentieth century onwards.²⁵ Work on the popularization of scientific knowledge is relevant, showing its links to nationalist aspirations based on patriotic-nationalist rhetoric, both in the dissemination of knowledge and in the creation of the idea of national progress linked to science.²⁶ Other studies focus on

¹⁹Hauge (1996).

²⁰Gellner (1983), Anderson (1991), Hobsbawm and Ranger (1992).

²¹Breuilly (1985).

²²Jordanova (1998).

²³Golinski (2008).

²⁴Raphael (1996), Metzler (2000), Brückweh et al. (2012).

²⁵Vom Bruch (1986).

²⁶Bensaude-Vincent (1997).

the institutional framework of science, as the relationship between universities and nationalist science.²⁷ In the realization of the idea, both of the nation and of the universal scientific progress in the person of the scientist and the cultural creator, the State will stylize its researchers as heroes or myths, collaborating in the formation of national identities. Thus, German and French studies focus on the analysis of the involvement of scientists in nationalist propaganda around the First World War.²⁸ Furthermore, studies dedicated to Nobel laureates have regarded them as a ranking to illustrate scientific capabilities and the potential of different nations.²⁹ In the Spanish case, an example would be the role of scientists as ambassadors of Francoism during the international isolation.³⁰ The progressive professionalization of scientific research as a modernizing force in the creation of the nation demands to consider the functionality of the latter to establish and legitimize the agenda of the scientist.³¹ However, many of the existing studies do not aim to analyse the complexity of the relations among science, state, and conceptions of the nation, but between nationalism and its concretion. At the same time, only very few studies have been devoted to the relationship between science and nation from the perspective of the new cultural history.³² Following this perspective, the proposal of this book is to replace the asymmetry of the classical model, according to which the nation state interferes in scientific practice, but not the other way around, with an approach, both analytical and heuristic, to the symmetrical interrelationship between state and science. According to this paradigm, we analyse the relationship between the state and science and culture considering both as organized resource management groups in an interactive pattern similar to a network: science and culture are no longer independent of policymakers. Rather, they are part of general policies, obtaining from them financial support and new goals for scientific agendas, while their results and output provide legitimation to the State political structure. In this vein, one of the contributors to this volume, Mitchell G. Ash, characterizes science as a social subsystem that provides resources to other social subsystems.³³ In return, science appropriates or consumes

²⁷ Porciani (2000).

²⁸ Prochasson and Rasmussen (1996), Mommsen (1995), Fell (2000).

²⁹ Crawford (1992), Friedman (2001).

³⁰ Presas i Puig (2005), Antolín Hofrichter (2018).

³¹ Malet (2009).

³² Jordanova (1998).

³³ Ash (2002) and his contribution in this book.

resources from other subsystems of society. Ash analyses science and its relationship with the State as set of resources interacting with each other. We must not understand the systems that support science and culture separately from scientific policy, but as an integral part of politics, providing the latter with the necessary resources for its legitimacy. In turn, national scientific and cultural systems reflect the different variants of nation-building.

As various authors have argued, regimes without political freedom have also been aware of the role of culture and science as the backbone of their ideas of ‘nation’ or ‘fatherland’/‘motherland’.³⁴ This is a historically relevant phenomenon in which Franco’s Spain was no exception. With respect to the relationship between science and nation under Franco’s regime, recent research highlights the existence of the link between ‘symbolic order’ and ‘scientific policy’.³⁵ Although the parameters, the context, and the actors and their objectives were obviously specific, during the Franco dictatorship, the role of culture and science in the new formation of the state was debated.³⁶

At the same time, although the absence of a genuine debate on science and culture during the Franco regime has traditionally been emphasized, recent studies have demonstrated the need to consider cultural and scientific development and its relationship to the idea of nation for a global understanding of Spanish history at this stage as well. Thus, the publications that have appeared in recent years on the Centro Superior de Investigaciones Científicas (CSIC)/Higher Center for Scientific Research, created in 1939—to which several contributions of the volume pay attention—have insisted on the need to consider not only the elements of rupture with the previous stage but also the continuities.³⁷ In this line, it has been highlighted that some of the main individual actors of the CSIC had been former scholars of the Junta de Ampliación de Estudios e Investigaciones Científicas (JAE)/Board for the Extension of Scientific Studies and Research founded in 1907—although the political-ideological bases of both institutions have been very different. The same can be said

³⁴ Kojevnikov (2004), Rodríguez López (Ed.) (2016), Saraiva (2016), Janué Miret (2019).

³⁵ Antolín Hofrichter (2018), Campubí (2014).

³⁶ Sanz Menéndez (1997), Herran and Roqué (2012).

³⁷ Among others Puig-Samper, M.A. (Ed.), (2007). A critic in Nieto-Galan (2008).

in reference to the Instituto de Estudios Políticos (IEP)/Institute for Political Studies, also created in 1939 and also considered in the volume.³⁸

This volume assumes the idea of science and culture that integrates the natural and experimental sciences, as well as the social and human sciences and the arts, considering that all of them share the generation of knowledge and its dissemination. Although we do not intend to comprehensively address all possible areas of the relationship between science, culture, and the arts on the one hand, and the idea of nationalization on the other during the first phase of Franco's regime, as a whole, the volume aims to discuss the fundamental aspects for its understanding. The aspects we address can be summarized in the following eight components:

1. The agents in the fields of science and culture, as well as in the State, who played a part as promoters of strategies and subsidizers of science and culture.
2. The institutions that acted as channels for disseminating narratives about the nation, which we can therefore call 'national institutions': academic, scientific, cultural, and artistic, whether official, semi-public, or private.
3. The interrelationship between the following three spheres: (a) agents of scientific and cultural production—scientists, academics, intellectuals, and artists; (b) scientific and cultural institutions, as well as the State itself; and (c) finally, the (self-)identifications of the formers as national representatives in different contexts, positioning themselves in the forefront of the nationalist-scientific patriotism to forge a scientific community for the nation.
4. The attempts to create a 'national science', both in the sense of promoting certain distinctive specialties and in cultivating a specific model of practising science, that is, the cultivation of national scientific landscapes from the state–nation and the science–culture relationships (CSIC, scientific academies, and institutions).
5. The multidimensional relationship between agents, transmitting institutions, state actors and receptors—'consumers' of national narratives—emerging from the different fields of science, culture, and arts, that is, the generation of a scientific interpretation of the nation (e.g. contribution from historical disciplines and social sciences).

³⁸ Sesma Landrín (2011).

6. The interrelation between the following three levels: (a) political and social transformations, (b) modifications in the narratives about the nation and the concept of the Spanish nation, and (c) changes in scientific and cultural policies.
7. The interchange of material and symbolic resources between political interests and scientific and cultural interests. In this sense, we intend to evaluate the language and symbols borrowed from science and culture to be used as instruments of transmission of national narratives, whether they allude to a supposed pre-existing Spanish national identity or they seek to create such an identity.
8. The links between the efforts to nationalize science and culture on the one hand and to internationalize them on the other, as well as the role of cultural and scientific transfer and exchange, not only as material resources but also as sources of prestige and political power. At this point, it should be considered that the promotion of science and culture was often carried out both at national and international levels by the same institutions. Thus, the fact that the State chose to empower some institutions more than others provides valuable information for the purposes of its project of nationalization. At this level of international relations, we consider the role of scientific and cultural diplomacy, a great driver of identification between science and culture and national images.

We have structured the treatment of the aforementioned issues in the book in five sections. The first one is devoted to the common theoretical and methodological bases that all contributions share, with special stress on the meanings attributed to science, culture, nation, and relations between them. The chapters which make up the second section address significant points in the scientific and cultural policies in Franco's 'New State', including their institutional, ideological, and symbolic elements, as well as a perspective on the evolution of the relationship between Catalan substate nationalism—a relevant phenomenon in twentieth-century Spanish history—and science. Women, and their roles in various areas of the regime's scientific and cultural system, constitute the leading thread of the third section. In relation to this point, it is necessary to keep in mind the mutual relationship between the construction of gender by the nation and the role of gender in shaping national imaginaries, also during Franco's

regime.³⁹ Despite official discourses of the regime's contempt for women's dedication to science and academia—and in general their presence in public sphere—incipient research has highlighted that there were women involved in cultural and scientific activities.⁴⁰ Therefore, we are convinced that for a proper exploration of the subject matter of this book, we need to address the still largely ignored role that women played in these areas and their relationship to the prevailing conception of nation and nationalization. Case studies on participation in the nationalization of different scientific disciplines and areas of the arts constitute the fourth section of the book. The volume closes with a fifth section, dedicated to exploring some perspectives on internationalization of culture, science, and technology in Franco's regime, thus offering the tools for a comparison with other Western countries during the Cold War consolidation phase.

In total, there are seventeen contributions that make up the five parts of the book. To the first part, dedicated to the theoretical foundations, belongs this introductory chapter, where we pursue to present the historiographical objectives of the book, its theoretical foundations, the state of the question on the most relevant aspects linked to our topic, and the nature of the contributions it contains. In addition, a contribution by Mitchell G. Ash completes this theoretical part of the book. His chapter considers the interaction processes established between science, the idea of nation, and culture, all of them concepts considered as moving targets. He affirms that the meanings of the terms science, nation (or national identity), and culture have fundamentally changed over time and have varied from one place to another in similar periods of time. In the medium term, national identity and nation itself have become increasingly complicated and ambivalent concepts in an increasingly globalized world. Science and erudition, as well as culture, have also changed radically since the beginning of the nineteenth century. Ash defends the idea that it is impossible to treat any of these three entities as something separate from the others. In his opinion, science is not only results of research or methods but also institutions. For this reason, sciences can also become centres of power. Ash sustains that the relationships between sciences and political power are not as one-sided as is often suggested or assumed. Attending to these interactions, periods of political power predominance, especially in dictatorships, have not always automatically produced pseudoscience. He

³⁹ Blasco Herranz (2014).

⁴⁰ Alcalá and Magallón (2008), Canales (2012), Romero de Pablos (2017).

further argues that from the historical perspective, we must speak of ideological connotations (assignments) of the sciences as discursive resources, or of scientific investigations carried out under different political priorities. In the nineteenth century, at least, and in many European countries in the early twentieth century, natural scientists, humanists, and public intellectuals were educated largely in the same elite high schools and values, and therefore should be considered members of a common culture. Members of all kinds of disciplines produced and propagated *national science*. For Ash, this is an important reason why the supposed fundamental difference between the natural and human sciences may not have been as significant for this particular history as is often assumed. Ash also discusses the term national sciences. He maintains that science is national, international, and transnational, often simultaneously. In this line, he warns that putting the term nation at the centre entails danger, either from a perspective of a single nation with too narrow a focus or from comparisons of a country's scientific policy with that of another, rather than considering the possibility of a transnational circulation of countries, ideas, and people. He concludes that a one-nation approach, which often simply reproduces existing institutional frameworks funded by the state without reflecting on them, cannot do justice to these complexities.

The second part of the book, which focuses on the scientific and cultural policies in Franco's 'New State', includes four contributions respectively devoted to aspects of historiography, symbolical architecture, epistemic communities and science makers, and the role of science and technology in Catalan substate nationalism. Andrés Antolín Hofrichter approaches the history of science under early Francoism, by focusing on its cultural expressions. He examines the narratives, symbols and rituals that surrounded the main institution founded by the new regime in order to promote and politically control scientific research: the Higher Council for Scientific Research (CSIC). Relying on studies on the symbolic dimension of institutions, he understands the High Council as an attempt to institutionally represent the capacity for 'science' of a Catholic nation and, above all, its elite. Antolín argues that the organizational framework of the High Council served to symbolize an allegedly restored 'Christian unity' of science and a specifically Spanish scientific path within the history of modern science. He analyses the organological language and symbology, and the religious-spiritual components used in publications and ceremonies. Following Antolín, they helped shaping a conception of 'science' that referred to a pre-industrial and pre-enlightened era—all this despite the

fact that this same institution had been created to incorporate, also, ‘technology’ and ‘natural sciences’. He concludes that, in order to solve this apparent contradiction, the High Council followed a logic of subordination and control: although ‘technology’ and ‘natural sciences’ were useful instruments, they also represented a sort of Trojan horse of a foreign ‘modernity’. Antolín concludes that this conception soon became unsustainable, as the regime dedicated its imagery to a new technical-industrial developmentalism in the 1950s. The next chapter, authored by Carolina Rodríguez López, studies the plans of Franco’s regime to recover, reconstruct, and implement a new political signification at the University City of Madrid. In the process of consolidation after the Spanish Civil War, Franco’s regime placed the University as one of its priorities. For those who wanted to establish an *ex novo* regime, it was evident that the university would be one of the pillars on which to settle. However, despite all the effects of victory, the University maintained previous traditions, habits that would be mixed with the Francoist ideas. Franco’s regime also inherited spaces that were significant and charged with the memory of war, as the University City of Madrid. Since 1927, especially during the Second Spanish Republic (1931–1939), the campus had been one of the most modern places in Madrid. Its design always tried to adapt the academic novelties to this new space, but after the Spanish Civil War, the campus became one of the scenarios favoured by the Franco regime to extol its ideology and, in short, serve as a political symbol for the New State. Rodríguez explores the symbols, images, and resources that Franco’s regime used to leave its mark on the campus (still visible today). The subsequent chapter of this second part of the volume is centred on the policies of nuclear energy during Franco’s regime. Albert Presas i Puig shows that the regime reacted quickly to the appearance of nuclear energy in the international policy. Its reaction is exemplified by founding the Junta de Energía Nuclear (JEN)/the Spanish Nuclear Energy Board, which can be compared to the initiatives of most of the countries that were trying to join the development of this new energy source. Presas i Puig considers the performance of the JEN as an epistemic community since it intended to advise the Francoist authorities and guide the development of this energy option until its industrial implementation. In a country without scientific and technological tradition, the generation of this dynamic started from specially trained actors with a special sense of opportunity. This is the role Presas i Puig recognizes in José María Otero Navascués. Following the proposal of Ash, Otero’s performance allows Presas i Puig

to analyse the relationships established between the industrial development policy of the regime (in the form of economic and institutional support) and Otero's performance offering the regime symbolic resources of modernity and international relationships with the most advanced scientific centres in the world, all at a time when Franco's regime needed to re-establish itself in the new international scenario over the years. The consideration of the JEN as an epistemic community not only helps to understand the actions of some of the actors that defined the Spanish nuclear development policy, but also allows the understanding of the modifications in its function, as a result of the changes in the national and international policy, in the course of the gradual opening of the regime. As part of that scientific political complex, JEN was affected in its original purpose by its desire to be the main actor of the nuclear programme by substantially modifying the political context, and with it, its significance in the policy of economic and technological developments of Franco's regime. At the time of its industrial concretion, nuclear energy acquired a new significance as an element of the new Spanish policy of economic liberalization, proposed by the new cadres of the Spanish administration—the so-called technocrats. They modified the status quo and incorporated new priorities (incorporation into international financing systems approach to Europe), opting once again to reaffirm and shield the interests of Spanish capital in the development of nuclear energy. In this way, both the JEN and Otero were reduced in their function to mere companions and no longer to defining strategies. In the last contribution of this second part of the book, Antoni Roca Rosell studies the role of science and technology in the nationalist debate in substate nationalism in Catalonia after the Spanish Civil War. The development of scientific and technological activity in the period before the Spanish Civil War was dramatically interrupted as a result of the war when an important part of the scientific community identified with the Second Republic and went into exile against the new regime. Some of their members were able to start new scientific careers in countries like Mexico, Venezuela, or Argentina. Those who remained in Spain had to comply with the strict political regulations imposed on university professors and members of scientific institutions. Before the Spanish Civil War, science and technology played a growing role in Catalonia. During the war, Catalan experts made valuable contributions to health care in medical areas which were relevant during the conflagration. Republican propaganda enhanced the importance of scientific culture and technical education. The press and publications of the

exiled Catalan community took over this purpose. Some Catalans in exile expressed the desire to pass on Republican experiences to the new generation and to promote science and technology. Some academics went into 'interior exile'; they were expelled from their institutions and obliged to develop a private career, leaving research behind. Franco's regime created a branch of the CSIC in Barcelona, which was also a strongly ideologized institution. The aim of this initiative was to hide the Republican successes. Despite the fact that there were several CSIC centres in Barcelona, scientific activity in Catalonia was significantly impaired. The alliance between science, technology, and the Catalan identity prior to Franco's regime was broken, and it was not replaced by another kind of alliance. In fact, it was probably due to the ideological commitment of science and technology to Franco's regime that these were regarded with scepticism or even hostility by the Catalan nationalist community. In the Catalan exile, plans for a free Catalonia included the wish to promote higher scientific research and universities at the service of the society.

The third part of the book devoted to the role of women contains three contributions. Fernando García Naharro explores the participation of women in a domain of men: the applied sciences in the CSIC. Under dictatorial conditions, there were several constraints imposed on science to abide by specific conventions and laws that shaped the legitimate actors working in the field of science. Under Franco, not all scientists were in the same condition: political repression and legal procedures were in the hands of the dictatorship to manage the reorganization of the brand-new national science. Thus, García Naharro argues that the dictatorship gave the official scientific institutions an important role in the construction of the legitimated scientific knowledge or in demarcating who had a legitimate voice in the field. In so doing, he focuses on the CSIC to analyse the official concept of science that led to the socio-discursive configuration of the scientific field: places and actors associated with representations and classificatory dichotomies that played an active role in shaping the scientific *ethos*. Hence, García Naharro explains that the official discourse of Franco's regime supported the image of the *vir modestus* (a male image of the scholar) within the scientific field with the social and political implications that it should carry with it: beliefs about the nature of the experts and their knowledge claims. The idea of science conceived as a male activity was constructed upon a deep-seated cultural bias transmitted by different channels, using cultural models and metaphors carrying gender meanings that devalue women and overvalue men. In the second part of this work,

Garcia Naharro answers the question of what kind of women had the legitimacy to be a ‘modest witness’ under Franco by studying the social profiles of women publishing in scientific journals, occupying research positions or having access to study abroad. It demonstrates that, alongside concerns of expertise and authorship, gender played a relevant role in the construction of those who have a legitimate voice in the field. Therefore, he aims to provide new knowledge about those women of science who worked in fields such as engineering or applied science in Spain during Franco’s regime. Women also played a relevant role in the field of the censorship of children and youth literature in Franco’s regime. This is the subject that José Soto-Vázquez and Ramon Tena-Fernández research in their contribution to this edited volume. Literary censorship is still one of the least known aspects of Franco’s regime, and this work aims to shed some light on the figure of the Reader 22. The authors contrast the proofs of the galley, the opinions of the censors, and the resolutions and erasures that are appreciated in them, as well as interviews with authors and editors, as object of the censorship. Children’s and young people’s literature maintained the obligation to request the censorship review process throughout Franco’s regime, which allows us to understand the zeal of the authorities on the surveillance of texts intended for younger readers. Since Reader 22 was almost always a woman, the analysis is an unprecedented study of the role played by women in censorship in Franco’s Spain in the field of children’s and youth literature, as well as their academic and personal profiles. The last part of the chapter is devoted to one of the most notable female censors: María Isabel Niño Mas. The last chapter of this third part of the book, authored by Vanessa Tessada, is dedicated to the contribution of the Female Section of Falange—the fascist unique party of the regime—to the Hispanic Community of Nations. The main objective of the chapter is to analyse the cultural influence of the Female Section of fascist party Falange on Latin America, as part of Spain’s diplomatic strategies during the first period of Franco’s dictatorship. As fascist Spain was banned after the Second World War, it sought strategies to enter the international scene. In this context, the Female Section acted as an agent in international affairs and, together with the Ministry of International Affairs and the ‘Institute of Hispanic Culture in Madrid’, it actively participated in the construction of the ‘Hispanic Community of Nations’. This community was a project of the Ministry to build a spiritual community to improve the role of Spain on the international stage, based on the historical relationship with Latin America and the leadership position that Spain could assume as a natural

bridge between Latin America and Europe. The Female Section proposed an archetype of Hispanic women as a contribution to the Community and, based on it, the Female Section put into practice several strategies to approach Latin American women who were pro-Falangist, Catholic, and conservative. The Female strategies included the creation of cultural associations of women in several countries of America; a scholarship system that granted more than a thousand women between 1947 and 1977 facilities to study in Spain; several presentations of the ‘Choirs and Dances of Spain’ in Latin American cities and the celebration of international congresses, among others. In this chapter, Tessada pays attention to the transnational space that these strategies helped to build during the first phase of Franco’s regime in the context of the Hispanic Community of Nations, in which young Latin American women would get acquainted with the ideas of Falangism, antifeminism, Hispanism, and conservative catholic thought.

The fourth part of the volume includes four contributions, respectively, on mathematics, the intellectuals of the so-called Generation of 1948, film-making, and art avant-garde. José Miguel Pacheco Castelaio signs the first chapter of this section, which offers an overview on the status of mathematics and mathematicians under Franco’s regime between 1940 and 1960. During the first decade, Spain was relatively isolated, first in the aftermath of the Spanish Civil War and the Second World War, then by the isolation decreed on Spain by the United Nations Organization between 1946 and 1950. From 1950 onwards, after Spain and the United States signed agreements leading to the installation of American military bases on Spanish territory (1955–1958), the rigid regime structures were somehow relaxed through ‘cooperation programmes’ in various fields, including academic interchanges and study scholarships. Under those political conditions, mathematics—or rather, some mathematicians—managed to survive and generate mathematical results despite the regime’s scarce interest. Three stages or ‘lives’ can be observed in the period studied, well correlated with Spanish international policies and the social and economic health of the regime. In addition, an analysis of the two leading Spanish mathematical journals is presented. Sara Prades Plaza analyses in the following chapter the legacy of Charles Maurras’ integral nationalism to the intellectuals of the Generation of 1948. Prades considers in detail their national discourse by which they gave an idealized image of the past and tried to rewrite national history to legitimize a politico-cultural project in the present. During the 1940s and early 1950s, the Maurrasian ideology

was taken up by the group formed around the Spanish journal *Arbor*. This group may also have been influenced by the integral nationalism of the Acción Española party, which was its ideological antecedent during the Republic. Their discourses vindicate a nation ruled by a monarch, the defence of regional plurality, and the insertion in an eminently Catholic and traditionalist Europe, as they identify with the European political culture of reactionary nationalism. This idea of a nation was the reason for colluding with the less monarchist and more Castilian sectors of the regime because the members of the Generation of 1948 considered themselves the true interpreters of their historical moment. Their work had an academic purpose, but they also exercised a political function, as many of the members of this group held positions of political, cultural, or ideological power. That is why they had no qualms about accepting the idea of Spain's hegemony, which was needed to legitimize Franco's regime after the defeat of fascism during the Second World War. The third contribution of this section, authored by Gabriela Viadero Carral, deals with nationalist stories in the cinema of Franco's regime. Cinema, besides being an artistic expression, is a cultural product, a highly effective tool to communicate ideas. In fact, during the twentieth century, cinema became the most powerful medium for several reasons: its extent (it reaches massive numbers of people), its efficiency (the image is the most expressive means), and its capacity to show as real what is not. Power structures soon realized how powerful cinema was and tried to control and guide it according to their interest. This is the case of Franco's reactionary regime, which controlled cinema through censorship, subsidies, and repression, especially until 1963. Franco's regime was, essentially, a nationalist regime. The Spanish Civil War was interpreted in the following terms: the insurgents defining themselves as the real Spaniards, the ones that defended their nation from enemy invasion. This defence of the Spanish nation became the argument Franco's regime used to legitimate itself, so it is not surprising that many of the films produced under Franco's rule used the Spanish nation idea in the interest of the regime. In the last contribution of this section of the book, Jorge Luís Marzo analyses the role of the Spanish artistic avant-garde of the 1950s. A substantial part of the Spanish abstract and informalist artists of the period undertook a path of collaboration with the dictatorial regime that would last a decade. This anomaly, if we compare it with the attitude of the creative groups with similar styles in other parts of the world, has hardly been analysed by Spanish academia. It was in the late 1990s that the history of art began to address the issue. Among the varied

interpretations that were emerging, there was one that was taking shape: the function of tradition as a nationalist narrative, especially the baroque one, which served as a cement for the construction of a platform of common interests. This platform allowed the regime to update its attachment to the essences, as well as project international homologation. It also allowed the artists to provide historical grounds for their works, within the framework of a renewed global competition of artistic brands during the Cold War. The national culture, which gathered around twisted appeals to historical immanence and contemporary update, was promoted as a meeting place between Franco's regime and the avant-garde, creating paradoxes, sometimes insoluble, which contaminated the instruments for their analysis.

The fifth and last part of the book dedicated to the internationalization of science and culture begins with a presentation on French Hispanism and Spanish cultural diplomacy by Antonio Niño Rodríguez. Niño analyses the efforts of the Francoist authorities to repair relations with the French university Hispanism, which had been interrupted by the Spanish Civil War. Since the early twentieth century, Spanish diplomacy had tried to use the University of Sorbonne as a spearhead for an ambitious plan of 'Hispanic intellectual expansion' in Europe. The war interrupted the university exchange, and it could not be resumed in the immediate post-war period because of the quarantine imposed on the dictatorship, as well as the hostile attitudes of the main leaders of the French Hispanism. However, the Spanish authorities were determined to rebuild the Spanish cultural presence in Paris as a sign of political normalization. The following two significant cases are studied: the difficult recovery of the academic exchange with the Institut d'Études Hispaniques of the Sorbonne, achieved in 1958, and the reclamation of control of the Colegio de España in Paris, beginning in 1949. However, the purpose changed and acquired a more defensive slant. The objective of the academic exchanges was no longer to connect the Spanish culture with the great currents of European thought, but instead to present the 'true Spanish tradition' in a medium considered naturally hostile, and to counteract the anti-Spanish sentiments of foreign historiography supposedly influenced by the Black Legend. The collaboration between universities, initially created to foment the prestige of the country on the international stage, was now compromised by the ideological condemnation of the dictatorship. Although the Spanish authorities put effort and resources into their ability to influence the orientation of French Hispanism, they were met with resistance from academic

authorities who were reluctant to engage in close academic cooperation for political reasons. The French Hispanism continued to pay attention to the representatives of the culture repudiated by Franco's regime and kept close ties with the republican intellectual exiles. They also accentuated the Latin Americanist orientation of Hispanism, despite formally resuming academic contacts with the Spanish authorities. Following the French case, Marició Janué i Miret analyses the Spanish–German cultural diplomacy between the end of the Second World War and the end of the 1950s. During the Second World War, Germany had reinforced its cultural diplomacy in relation to Franco's Spain. Having as an inescapable prerequisite the ideological agreement, the Nazi authorities sought to attract the most relevant intellectuals and academics. In Spain, its main receptors were the most radicalized sections of the Falange unique party. As for Franco's regime, it only began to reduce its relations with Nazi Berlin, when it had evidence that Germany could lose the war. This chapter asks about the consequences of the end of the war on German–Spanish cultural collaboration. At the beginning of the Cold War, the Spanish–German cultural diplomacy presents the singularity of being conditioned, both for West Germany by its recent National Socialist past and the subrogation of the functions of the German government in the Allied Control Council, and for Spain by the continuity of the dictatorship. As a result, both states had to confront international isolation. The analysis examines the degree of dislocation of mutual cultural diplomacy as a result of these circumstances. Likewise, it examines the elements of change, continuity, and/or adaptation—personal, institutional, and ideological-discursive—once the relations were re-established following the creation of the West German state. In addition, it investigates how the international context and the imperative to redefine its national discourse conditioned the two countries, as well as how the evolution in the place occupied respectively by the two countries in the international balance of powers was reflected in the initiative in mutual cultural relations. Janué concludes that, in perspective, the end of the War did not have a rupture effect in terms of the tradition of German–Spanish cultural cooperation, but rather that of pause. Her analysis aims to contribute to the debate around the limits of denazification and the sociopolitical and cultural continuities between the Europe of fascism and that of the Cold War. The penultimate chapter of the book, authored by Nicolás Sesma-Landrin, deals with the cultural operation and strategies of Franco's regime, with particular emphasis on its desire to become the sole representative of Spanish science and culture in the eyes of the

international community, always in competition with the intellectuals of the republican exile. For that purpose, Sesma takes the social sciences as a case study. First, he analyses the history of the creation and consolidation of the social sciences in Spain, a history which reflects accurately the political dynamic of the country at that time, marked by the rivalry between the dominant state religion model, which privileged a catholic approach to social sciences, and the alternative project of liberal-democratic nationalization, promoted by the JAE, which privileged an empirical approach for social sciences. Second, he analyses the situation after the end of the Spanish Civil War, marked by the exile of the main authors of empirical sociology, internationally acknowledged as the main representatives of Spanish culture. Inside Franco's regime, national-catholic social sciences became hegemonic; however, some sectors of the Falange party also tried to appropriate the JAE legacy and its practice of empirical social sciences for their own purposes. This process of appropriation occurred mainly through the Falangist IEP. Finally, he studies the process by which the academic production of Franco's regime succeeded in supplanting the exiled authors as representatives of national culture. One major step for such change was the entry of Franco's Spain into the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in 1952. In this sense, Sesma describes the role played by the Francoist permanent delegation to the institution and its main figure, Joan Estelrich, who decided to privilege the participation of the authors coming from the Institute of IEP and of empirical social sciences in the Spanish contributions to the publications and activities of the UNESCO. The last chapter of the book is dedicated to American geopolitics in 1950s' Spain handled by Lorenzo Delgado López-Escalonilla. Delgado analyses the use of science as a tool for American geopolitics in the Spain of the 1950s. After the Second World War, the United States built an R&D system with a large component of public funds and resources, which was consolidated during the Cold War. Nuclear energy and the space race were two of the most outstanding dimensions of the scientific-technological rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union, which in turn served as a showcase concerning each of the models they represented—capitalism and communism. Simultaneously, the US government looked to science as a tool with which to gain allies and capture the sympathies of relevant groups in other countries. In this sense, the American power sought to strengthen its leadership by promoting training programmes, exchanges of teachers and researchers, and a growing network of international collaboration. Spain

joined this process starting in the mid-1950s, following the bilateral agreements that allowed the United States to build military bases in the country. The ‘leaders of public life’ were the main target groups of these American initiatives, and several programmes for the training of human capital were directed at them. The training of the Spanish army occupied a preferential position. At the same time, especially through the technical assistance programme, professional cadres from various specialties were trained, with priority given to the fields of nuclear technology, aeronautical engineering, and business management. From the Spanish perspective, knowledge transfer was important, along with the establishment of professional contacts, publication of monographs and specialized journals, translation of reference works, and increasing bilateral collaboration in an array of different sectors. In addition to those collaboration programmes, the scientific-technological leadership of the United States was disseminated through its machinery of persuasion in Spain in two key areas, consistent with what was happening globally: atomic energy and, somewhat later, progress in the space race. As Delgado shows, all this prepared the way for an international opening of the country in the following decade.

Thus, the present edited volume attempts to offer a new southern European perspective on the role of science and culture in modern societies as tools of nationalization. It aims to contribute to a better understanding of contemporary Europe, considering scientific and cultural development as engines of economic and social modernization and, as such, sources of political power. Given the particularities of Franco’s Spain and the relative scarcity of studies on southern Europe, we hope that the volume will be an important contribution for readers beyond the historians of Spain.

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The Nationalisation of the Avant-garde during Francoism

Jorge Luís Marzo

INTRODUCTION

It was not until relatively recently (the 1990s) that the relationship between Franco's nationalism and the artistic avant-garde that emerged in Spain after the Civil War (1936–1939) began to be included in the repertoire of interests of Spanish historiography.¹ Some works of art, particularly the post-informalist, and a significant part of the artistic and literary critique, focused on this relationship for decades, but it had little place in the history of art, unless to celebrate or demonstrate the Spanishness (or otherwise) of a particular artist.² As this relationship was intrinsic to the theoretical and casuistic core of the Spanish history of art, the academy's

¹ A brief review of this update process can be found in Albarrán (2019), and Marzo and Mayayo (2015).

² See Díaz Sánchez and Llorente (2004).

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approach to it soon became engrained, as it implied considering the academy itself as an object of study. It was, therefore, necessary to change all the instruments to understand the institutional role in the process of communion between the avant-garde and nationalism. To start with, it was necessary to approach the political competition of the avant-garde in a different manner.

The avant-garde in Spain was politically relevant, thanks to the role assigned to art and culture from the mid-1940s. The case of surrealism illustrates both the tensions to which pre-war styles were subjected in the first two decades of the Franco dictatorship, with those styles originally being linked to ideological manifestos, and the effects that those tensions had on the way that the avant-garde was defined. After the Civil War, many of the young artists returned to the surrealist and abstract heritage, avoiding at all times provoking political effects and short-circuiting all memories of the side adopted during the war by the surrealist movement, which gave majority support to the legitimate government of the Republic. Many groups in Almería, the Canary Islands, Valladolid, Barcelona, Madrid, Santander, and Valencia followed this direction to a greater or lesser extent. The cases of Santander and Barcelona are particularly revealing of those twists in the style and substance that it carries, and the role demanded of art to transcend the miseries of political life. Personalities such as Rafael Santos-Torroella played a relevant role in the seduction that these avant-garde practices exerted in the cultural political wastelands of the dictatorship. In the morning, he would insist to his friend and poet Luys Santa Marina, then leader of the Falange in Barcelona, that there was nothing to fear from post-surrealism after it had been purged from Breton, and that he turned a blind eye to certain exhibitions and magazines. In the afternoon, he attended literary *soirées* with members of the bourgeoisie of the Eixample (a neighbourhood of the Catalan capital), and invited them to bankroll the emergence of a new artistic scene that no longer looked outwards but inwards. It should be remembered that Santos-Torroella had been sentenced to death in 1939 for his role as political commissary at the front, which he escaped thanks to the efforts of the Falangist and philologist historian Antonio Tovar in Valladolid.

In 1948, the School of Altamira was founded in Santander, dedicated to abstraction, which strongly captured the attention of Eugenio d'Ors, who was, at that time, the main official factotum of the arts. Art, according to the School, had to free itself from the shackles of worldly events and undergo a process of 'essentialisation', the same that could be found in the

simple but profound signs featured in the Cantabrian cave paintings. In 1949, d'Ors created the *Salón de los Once*, a showcase for post-surrealist abstraction in Madrid. In 1953, the First Congress of Abstract Art of the Menéndez Pelayo International University of Santander was finally held, an event that certified the pairing process between a part of the avant-garde and a sector of the Franco regime, thanks to the full public sponsorship of Manuel Fraga, secretary general of the Institute of Hispanic Culture.

That process illustrates the success of the 'incompetence' policy of intellectual Francoism with respect to the avant-garde and to art and culture in general: not only did it drain the works of ideological life but sought its legitimacy in the promotion of its immersion in the wake of the national tradition, and there was no better body for this than the Institute of Hispanic Culture, created by Franco in 1945 to shelter the Falangist intellectuals, who had left the government and whose militarism had to be discouraged after the defeat of fascism in Europe. Its first director, Joaquín Ruiz-Giménez, who was attached to the Vatican sector of the regime, advocated for the end of the harangue and the adoption of a 'spiritual' diplomacy that could find allies in Catholic countries, particularly in Latin America, and that would contribute to the creation of a story that would underline the civilising aspect of the Hispanic tradition. The informalist abstract avant-garde was immediately interpreted academically as essentialist and transcendent, humanist and existentialist, adjectives that conveyed a supposedly national act, practically ahistorical. The Spanish artistic nation was, therefore, blended within the framework of the cultural policies of the Franco regime, through a phenomenological narrative by which any expression of the truly national genius could be described in relation to the effects of consensus that the great figures of its past had conceived on a global level, even beyond the fact that the artists had political intentions, as was evidently the case of Goya, Picasso, or Miró. Moreover, to articulate those effects, who better than the academy to separate the wheat from the chaff, to decide who was 'competent' and who was not. If the analysis of Spanish art was, above all, a hermeneutic project, the role of the academy became relevant by adopting a fully competent function as an arbitrator of the national. Hence, the need, as noted above, for the university to radically change the instruments it used to explore the history of art, based both on analysis of the causes and mechanisms whereby the institutions and their followers assumed such a political function and on the exploration of a whole set of artistic ideas and practices whose

objectives were not to comply with the nationalist order of cultural production but to provide spaces for debate and criticism of social production. The present text is certainly situated within the wake of these historiographic transformations.

FRANCOIST POLICIES AND ARTISTIC MEMORY: PHASES

Some studies have pointed out that the efforts to nationalise a large part of Spanish artistic production cannot be reduced to the Civil War and the subsequent dictatorship (1939–1977).³ In fact, the nationalist policies of cultural memory were gradually shaped through the sanction and canonisation of certain cultural formats, first in the hands of the academies of Fine Arts themselves, with their origins in the Enlightenment, and, later, in those of the regenerationist and noucentist movement and the Generation of '98, which contributed to the homologation of the 'Spanish problem' to the intense nationalist debates that occurred worldwide in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and in fact comprised a true war of narratives. These debates discussed the role of culture as a guarantee of consistency and survival in the new global brand market, still imperialist, but increasingly linked to Soft Power, and the persuasion that can be exerted based on culture as opposed to the traditional repressive mechanisms⁴. The progressive influence of stories based on 'obvious fate' in certain countries in the late nineteenth century, such as American-style Pan-Americanism, Pan-Germanism, Francophony, or the Commonwealth, promoted the emergence in Spain (and in sectors of the upper-class Latin American bourgeoisie, conservative and Catholic) of the intellectual and diplomatic phenomenon of *Hispanidad*, whose fundamental doctrine was defined by the defence of a historical and cultural space that presented signs of identity rooted in language, miscegenation, and religion, which were proposed in open confrontation with the 'Nordic' doctrines considered utilitarian and mercantilist. This issue became one of the main concerns of the Generation of 1898, a group of writers and artists who portrayed and analysed national demoralisation after the loss of the last overseas colonies under the pressure of the United States. Ángel Ganivet and Josep Pla stated that 'our historical role obliges us to transform our

³Tusell (1999); Cabrera (1999); Marzo (2010)

⁴Nye (2004)

material action into a spiritual one'.⁵ José María Pemán and Miguel de Unamuno were sure, even from different perspectives, that language and culture must confront any technocratic empire to come.⁶ Unamuno's famous 'Let them invent!', which must be considered within the context of the controversy with Ortega y Gasset between 1906 and 1912 regarding the Europeanisation of Spain and the role of positivism in this process, would become the hallmark of an entire era: 'It is useless to go around it, our contribution is above all a literary contribution [...] and since there exists and must exist a differentiation of the spiritual and physical work, both in communities and in individuals, we have this task [...]'.⁷ Unamuno, therefore, would claim that art was the infallible mirror of the Spanish: 'If we want to penetrate the Spanish soul, we should be attentive to its painters, for the Spaniard sees better than he thinks.'⁸

In this context, certain events fomented the narrative process of what should be defined as Spanish culture, and the role of this culture in the projection of the country's history: at the National Exhibitions of Fine Arts (since 1853), the Universal Exhibitions of 1888 and 1929 (Barcelona), or the Ibero-American Exhibition in Seville (1929), the ideology of the expressive forms that portrayed the national idiosyncrasy were slowly taking shape both in Spanish (with the Baroque as its main theme) and Catalan (in this case, embracing the Romanesque) or Basque nationalism. The underlying idea in this long process was that, in the face of the failure of politics (understood as the backwardness of capitalist democracy and social science in relation to Europe), Spain recognised itself in its culture. Cultural expressions substitute the political, which cannot be expressed in any other manner. Cultural expression, thus, acquires a strong public and national competence.

However, it was undoubtedly the emergence in Spain of a radical nationalism in the late 1920s that gave rise to a profoundly essentialist reformulation of culture that would have full public competence with the victory of Franco's troops in 1939. We can distinguish three clear stages in that process:

(1) In the first stage, already in the years before the Civil War and later during the war, the Spanish Falange, a party of fascist ideology founded in

⁵ Pérez Montfort (1992): 24

⁶ *Ibid.*: 17

⁷ Unamuno (1911): 329

⁸ Tusell (1999): 98

1933 by José Antonio Primo de Rivera, defined culture in ideological terms as a civilising fight against all that was considered ‘anti-Spanish’ and ‘alienating’, and that had the effect of dividing the Spanish intellectual and cultural production in a Manichean manner, between those whose purpose was to continue the old imperialist and Catholic traditions supported by a centralised state and those others considered weak or corrupt, either for a decadent liberalism or for being considered to serve revolutionary objectives of social and political transformation, and supported by supra-national interests. The ‘intellectuals’ became priority targets of the attacks by the fascist forces: ‘Let the intellectuals die!’ was loudly shouted by the founder of the Legion José Millán Astray to Miguel de Unamuno at the auditorium of the University of Salamanca in 1936. In the opinion of Romualdo de Toledo, deputy for the Traditionalist Communion, the country had risen up in arms before ‘the lack of essential education and of doctrinal and moral training, the alienating mimicry, the Russophilia and effeminacy, the dehumanisation of literature and art, the fetishism of the metaphor, and the verbalism without content’.⁹ In this way, what were considered ‘appropriate cultural forms’ were identified to establish the national as opposed to those cultural expressions that denied it. The monarchist politician Eugenio Vegas Latapie clarified with great precision what forced the differential ‘factor’ of the intellectuals: ‘It was one thing to senselessly shoot people, but quite another to purge the education that forms the conscience of a nation, and whose control is vital.’¹⁰ The Marquis of Quintanar was also clear: ‘There are not two sides here that can parley; on one side is the Army and the Spanish people, on the other is a collection of traitorous intellectuals and professional assassins. They must be exterminated without mercy.’¹¹ In his speech on 1 October 1936, General Franco justified his own cultural war in the same manner: ‘A current of mistaken intelligentsia that, despising everything that truly national thought meant, had a preference for everything bizarre that was generated in other countries.’¹²

In this context of repression, both physical and semantic, Unamuno’s interpretation of the cultural character of the Spanish nation was notoriously updated. The ‘national’ artist was to represent the interests of the

⁹ Claret (2006): 24

¹⁰ Claret (2006): 26

¹¹ *Ibid.*: 348

¹² Reproduced in the Spanish newspaper *ABC*, Seville edition, on 2 October 1936.

homeland; he was to symbolise the inextricable union between the people and the leaders, whose epitome was the glorious painting of the Golden Age, when the ‘intimate communion’ between genius and monarchy was achieved, and which could be so vividly perceived in the Prado Museum. Hence, the discredit with which the nineteenth and twentieth centuries were seen, when the link between artists and power was severed, a consequence of an autonomous and anti-transcendent conception of artistic practice. The artist, in particular that practitioner of modern styles, became immediately suspicious of national heresy (ignoring that many of the artists who supported Francoism had been militants in the pre-war avant-garde), since he had replaced the transmission of spirituality with social transformation and iconographic iconoclasm. Therefore, the Falangist mural painter José Aguiar questioned in 1940 what should be interpreted when speaking of ‘social’ art: ‘Social art? Yes; this meant political art, pedagogy with a luscious graphic. Conversely, art is social simply for nurturing the collective, that is, the national, of its purest emotion, of its mystique.’¹³ The artist had to give his individuality to a higher purpose, which was the new state and its project to re-catholicise society. The modern novelty was, therefore, closed, or at least suspended, pending official confirmation of its functionality. It is in this context that we should understand the words of the Falangist philosopher and politician Adolfo Muñoz Alonso when he stated that ‘novelty, however traditional we may suppose it to be, is anti-Catholic’¹⁴.

(2) The second stage takes place from the end of the war until 1945. First, it should be noted that the repression and exile of a great number of creators and cultural technicians (approximately 70,000 people linked to the arts, teaching, and cultural industries had to go into exile¹⁵) intensified the desire to make a clean sweep of cultural notions from the immediate republican past. The cultural desert that arose with the repression and exile of so many creators and intellectuals, together with the first post-war academic, iconographic, and architectural reconstruction programmes, provided an apparent basis for the implementation of unified policies by the Falange, which would allow them to create a new aesthetic model that was already completely nationalised.

¹³ Llorente (1995): 60

¹⁴ Echeverría Plazaola and Menekes (2011): 75–77

¹⁵ Marzo and Mayayo (2015): 24–65

The cultural areas of the first Franco government in Burgos, created during the war, had already been taken over mostly by Falangists, including Ramón Serrano Suñer, Dionisio Ridruejo, Juan Antonio Giménez Arnau, Antonio Tovar, Gonzalo Torrente Ballester, Martín de Riquer, Luis Rosales, Manuel García Viñolas, Leopoldo Panero, Felipe Vivanco, Eugenio d'Ors, and Agustín de Foxá. The Plastic Arts Section of the National Propaganda Service was appointed to aesthetically guide the appearance of the new state. The rather vague objective of all of these figures was to constitute a fascist state art that would celebrate the dynamics of the Christian crusade; the condemnation of academicism as a flawed and spiritless form, but also of an important part of the avant-garde as castrator of the national and imposer of the foreign; and the joyous choral militancy of a movement at the forefront of the rebirth of the national and imperial memory. To centrally manage these objectives, the Council of the *Hispanidad* was established in 1941, and refounded at the end of 1945 as the Institute of Hispanic Culture (*Instituto de Cultura Hispánica*—ICH), which we will discuss below.

The ephemeral Falangist aesthetic project was, therefore, scaffolded on various fronts. In addition to the strictly propagandist media, such as the cinema, radio, and press, it is worth mentioning, first, the architecture and monuments, within the framework of reconstruction programmes, that pursued the idea of a 'national style', as in the lines adopted by the General Directorate for Devastated Regions and Restorations that was created in 1939. In the early 1940s, several National Assemblies of Architecture and conferences of the Federation of Town Planning and Housing were held, promoted by publications such as *Reconstrucción* or the *Revista Nacional de Arquitectura*, in order to establish unitary criteria for action, attempting, without success, to mimic certain formulations of aesthetic unity from Germany and Italy.¹⁶ In fact, the Spanish aesthetic traditionalism defended by this early Francoism advocated for the Herrerian model derived from the Monastery of El Escorial—a sober, monastic, and imperial style—as a precursor of the new fascist orders based on the implementation of a grandiloquent state rationalism. The Spanish fascist culture was presented, therefore, with its own traditions, without wanting to seek inspiration from foreign models. The project of *El Valle de los Caídos*, promoted by Franco himself in 1940, was born from those arguments. Muralism also became a way of monumentally expressing the new national order, thanks

¹⁶López Díaz (2003)

to the impulse given to this type of format by magazines, such as *Jerarquía* and *El Español*, which endorsed the multiple commissions requested from José María Sert, José Aguiar, Daniel Vázquez Díaz, Francisco Baños, and Ramón Stolz Viciano.

The second aspect of the cultural policies of this stage was the exhibitions, particularly of sacred art, which served to focus the propaganda debate on the reconstruction of the religious iconography devastated during the war and to support the religious discourse of the state and Church's role in the management of culture. The exhibitions of religious art held in 1939 in Valencia and Vitoria, or the one in Madrid in 1944, were aimed at reaffirming the profession of faith of the new state, searching for anti-communist support in international forums, and preventing possible disagreements in the reconstruction of the destroyed temples and religious objects, so that this would be channelled into the 'truly national' styles. This issue strongly reveals the development of the narrative regarding the constitution of a supposed national style. In January 1943, the art critic Tomás Borrás requested that sculptors refuse to reconstruct the religious carvings based on 'standard effigies in an anodyne, deliquescent, and mirrored series', and not to lose sight of 'the pathetic force and the successful decision of chanting that they had with Berruguete or with Gregorio Hernández' (artists of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, respectively).¹⁷ The imagery tradition of the early imperial years represented the basis on which to rebuild, thus avoiding modern idiosyncrasies, which, either for their spiritual insignificance or for their formal banality, short-circuited the message of the state.

We termed this first Falangist project of fusing culture into a state style as 'ephemeral'. In fact, since 1945, everything had been left to chance. The German and Italian defeat put an end to the Spanish fascist chimera. Gabriel Ureña pointed out the causes of that failure. First, the defeat of Hitler and Mussolini led to a retraction of the most clearly fascist impulses in Spain, thanks to a diplomatic strategy aimed at projecting neutrality, in which the Falangist ideologies had no place. Second, the impoverished post-war economy did not contribute to the artistic excesses proposed by some state bodies, usually expressed in magnificent urban and architectural works. Third, and significantly, the deep traditionalist nature of Spanish fascism built certain historical works and ensembles that already

¹⁷BORRÁS, Tomás (1943): 'Conjectures on Plastic Arts', Spanish newspaper *El Español*, No. 10, 16 January 1943, p. 8. Reproduced in Díaz Sánchez and Llorente (2004): 195

existed in the Spanish heritage.¹⁸ M^a Isabel Cabrera has already demonstrated that the historicist nature of Spanish fascism is much stronger than that of the rest of the European totalitarian regimes.¹⁹ There is no better expression of the cultural legacy of tradition than the words of the minister of national education, José Ibáñez Martín, in 1941: ‘To give back to Spain the sense of its responsibility to the world, all Spanish had to be reminded of the imperial value of our classical culture and the universalist sense of Spanish Catholic thought.’²⁰

How was this ‘responsibility to the world’ that Spanish culture assumed from 1945 channelled? Which steps were taken to merge post-war cultural diplomacy, the emergence of avant-garde movements, its official acceptance, and the role of tradition that was so precious for the dictatorship? It is now time to unfold the third stage of the process of the nationalisation of culture, the stage that has to do with the post-war avant-garde that we intend to describe here.

TRADITION AND DE-IDEOLOGISATION

How was it possible for the most important avant-garde artists and critics of the Spanish post-war period, most of them opposed to the dictatorship, to openly collaborate with the regime for the implementation of its cultural policies? This question, which was openly disregarded by Spanish historiography until relatively recently, creates such an accumulation of paradoxes, disappointments, and twists that it can certainly be considered the ‘black hole’ of the history of art that was written in Spain. We will not address here the important role that the definition of culture by public authorities and the world of art had on that issue during the Transition and the 1980s; they constructed a de-ideologised narrative of the cultural expressions produced under the dictatorship to generate a new value of consensus in the heat of a fragile democracy.²¹ Instead, we will focus on the process that enabled an unprecedented merging of the avant-garde and (Francoist) nationalism, especially throughout the 1950s, thanks to a peculiar understanding of aesthetic memory and transcendence.

¹⁸ Ureña (1982): 23

¹⁹ Cabrera (1999): 199

²⁰ Álvarez Casado (2002): 49

²¹ Marzo (2010b)

On 18 July 1945, after the defeat of the European fascisms, Franco changed the leadership of the government, replacing the most exalted Falangists with the 'liberal' Falangists. In December, the Council of the *Hispanidad* was refounded, converted into the ICH under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and provided with a very generous budget. The ICH was born with the intention of 'maintaining the spiritual ties between all individuals who composed the cultural community of the *Hispanidad* [...] through an instrument of cultural dialogue',²² although in private it stated that 'it is not about creating culture, but of using the existing one as a support abroad to mobilise aid and alliances'.²³ The then minister of foreign affairs, Alberto Martín Artajo, described it as follows: 'The role of the Institute is to use all the weapons of diplomacy and its intelligence in the defence of the isolation decreed by the United Nations [...] through the hosts of thought and culture'; he also declared that the institution must vindicate 'the reason of Spain against the unreason of half the world.'²⁴ In fact, the function of the ICH was none other than to prepare a cultural state narrative in which the 'naturalness' of the traditional narrative of the marriage between state and culture was a guarantee of success, exploring its applicability in an international cultural environment exposed to a battle of post-war ideological narratives, kindly offering the artistic Hispanic inheritance as a symbol of durability and good neighbourhood. The ICH was a school of cultural propaganda in which some of the most relevant cultural managers of the regime were trained, such as the following: Manuel Fraga Iribarne, secretary of the Institute in 1951; Luis González Robles, art commissioner, affiliated to the General Directorate of Cultural Relations; or Carlos Robles Piquer, director of the University Section.

Why is the role of the ICH relevant in the history of communion between the avant-garde and Spanish nationalism that is being addressed here? Because it was the main instrument used by the regime to convert the fascist enthusiasm, hastily abandoned after the end of World War II, into a national-existentialist discourse, which would erase the strong 'exceptionalist' features of the regime, projecting a cultural normality that could somehow be homologated abroad. The ICH produced a narrative of authenticity, anti-communist, culturalist, and anti-materialist, that would sustain its value as a cultural, spiritual, and ecumenical power, with

²² Law of 31 December 1945, Official State Gazette, 2 January 1946

²³ Delgado Gómez-Escalonilla (1992): 461

²⁴ *Ibid.*: 458–459

its sights set on two diplomatic fronts: the first, the European countries with the greatest Catholic roots (Italy, France, and Belgium) and Latin America; the second, the United States, from whose geostrategic and anti-communist interests in the emerging Cold War Spain hoped to obtain returns.

One of the main arguments of the ICH was the capacity of the state to redirect the same traditions on which Spanish Falangism was based, but now towards the interior of the individual, towards existentialism, without appeals to structural and collective changes. The dictatorship began a process of social depoliticisation based on precisely the same Falangist arguments that it now intended to abandon: that styles pass over Spain without affecting it; that the style of Spain is itself; that Spain, despite the modernisation that it is pursuing, continues to be naturally and naively counter-modern, understanding this adjective as the nation's desire not to abandon a certain humanist anti-utilitarianism with religious roots. With no risk of exaggeration, we could describe it as a process of 'trans-fascisation' by maintaining the basic concepts of the traditional nationalist discourse but located in a naturalistic and culturalist narrative that appears normal.

The promotion of that difference had much to do with the new opposition against the political aspects of the modern in art during the Cold War: how to merge nationalism, freedom (or its absence), and style in the expressionist path of abstraction as the supreme Western means against the fascist and Stalinist totalitarianisms that promoted spiritual automatism, or against the commercial product seen by this apparent humanism as a mere leash of banality? Here, it should be borne in mind the importance of the international debate on the constitution of national styles based on ideological affiliations, a dispute led by the United States but in which a good part of the European countries participated.²⁵

While in France, the informalist movement which emerged in the early 1950s advocated a radical surrealist and expressionist shift that focused on the volcanic manifestation of existentialist subjectivity to cope with the horror of the recent war tragedy, in Germany an abstract expressionism was cultivated to not only claim the full creative freedom annihilated during Nazism but also offer the individual path as the only way to overcome collective guilt, without forgetting the post-surrealist experiences led by groups of artists in Amsterdam, Copenhagen, and Brussels. In the United States, on the other hand, the debate was conducted under a notable

²⁵ See Guilbaut (2007)

ideological imprint, in which the government played a prominent role. American Abstract Expressionism was presented as clear evidence of the desire to do and of the communicative and unmasking desire of the radical and liberating individualism that post-war America intended to represent against the stylistic and political guidelines present in the communist bloc. The works of critics such as Clement Greenberg and Harold Rosenberg and artists such as Jackson Pollock, Mark Rothko, Franz Kline, Clyfford Still, Robert Motherwell, Willem de Kooning, and Mark Tobey were presented as a genuine expression of the historical momentum of the American empire through the ‘moral embodiment’ of a new global Enlightenment project, based on ‘social individualism’, symbolic of the marriage between democracy and capitalism. Thus, democracy and art were rescued from the ruins of Europe by the United States, which offered them to the world as the supreme form of free expression. Alfred d’Harnoncourt, director of the Museum of Modern Art in New York (MOMA), a central institution in the construction of that narrative, defended the American *civilitas* in 1948 in the following terms: ‘a society incredibly enriched thanks to the full development of the individual for the sake of society as a whole. I believe that the ideal name of that society is democracy, and I also believe that modern art, in its infinite variety and in its incessant exploration, is its most outstanding symbol’.²⁶

The US government soon embraced that conceptual scaffolding. Through international itinerant exhibition programmes, conferences, and publications, American Abstract Expressionism unfolded as a cultural Marshall Plan during the 1950s and 1960s.²⁷ The Spanish authorities, eager to abandon the autarchy of the 1940s and prone to the use of cultural diplomacy as an instrument of international alliances, immediately understood the advantages of embracing the American programmes. Therefore, for example, on 27 September 1955, the Promotion of the Decorative Arts (*Fomento de Artes Decorativas*—FAD) in Barcelona hosted a lecture by d’Harnoncourt, the aforementioned director of MOMA, who, along with other members of the museum, such as Alfred Barr (founding director), Porter A. McCray (director of the itinerant

²⁶ D’HARNONCOURT, René (1948): ‘Challenge and Promise: Modern Art and Modern Society’, lecture read at the Annual Meeting of The American Federation of Arts. Quoted in Guilbaut (2007): 340

²⁷ For the cultural programmes and strategies of the US government and its main art institutions during the Cold War, see Guilbaut (2007); STONOR SAUNDERS, Frances (2013): ‘The CIA and the Cultural Cold War’, Barcelona, Debate.

exhibitions department), and Frank O'Hara (chief curator), became notorious figures in the relations that were established between Franco's government and the American artistic circles. The argument of d'Harnoncourt's lecture in Barcelona could not be more appropriate: the construction of tradition and artistic identity in the context of a universal program: "We should not be afraid of what we are told that universal tendencies annul the personality."²⁸ D'Harnoncourt raised the issue of the *Kunstwollen*, whereby the desire of the artist (their 'blessed individuality') must lead the interpretation of national identities, an idea that would quickly find its place in the numerous texts promoted by the ICH. It was precisely in 1955 that one of the star exhibitions of the American cultural programme, *Modern Art in the United States*, made its appearance in Barcelona. The event *A selection of the collections of the Museum of Modern Art in New York*, within the framework of the III Hispanic-American Art Biennial produced by the ICH, confirmed the intense relations of cultural diplomacy between the governments of Spain and the United States. It began with the opening of the Institute of North American Studies in Barcelona in 1951, and culminated with the opening, in 1960 in New York, of the exhibitions *Before Picasso, After Miró* (Guggenheim Museum), and *New Spanish Painting and Sculpture* (MOMA).

We started this text with surrealism, and the process that led to its de-ideologisation in the hands of the new managers and critics who were the protagonists of the Spanish art circles in the late 1940s and early 1950s. The influence of the international debate on the de-ideologisation of creative practices did indeed have a significant influence in that process. If the new international styles were promoted from the perspective of depoliticisation as an instrument of a cultural policy typical of liberal, individualistic, capitalist, and 'benign' societies (as opposed to the communist agenda), surrealism and abstraction promoted by the ICH and its followers could be argued on essentially the same terms, as they, in fact, were. However, the coincidence of approaches was also manifested in another aspect: the need to subvert the banality of a mechanical and commercial modernity to reveal the undeniable power of the individual, presented in the context of telluric vocation and destiny. Moreover, there was nothing like the term 'destiny' to support the essence of the national and its cultural memory.

²⁸ Conference reproduced in *La Vanguardia Española*, Barcelona, 28 September 1955, p. 17; and in the Bulletin of the Promotion of the Decorative Arts, IV quarter, Barcelona, 1955, p. 96.

This doctrine should not be understood as an underground current that we can only perceive as time has passed, but as part of the official manifestations of the regime. In the opening speech of the First Hispano-American Art Biennial, held in Madrid in 1951, the Minister of Education, Joaquín Ruiz Giménez, declared, in Franco's presence, that "radical individual vocation", "spiritual transcendence", "universality", and "historical sense" bring together the various elements of the equation that allowed the regime and the avant-garde to merge.²⁹ In this, the role of the ICH was central and Felipe Vivanco was one of the first to start working on this merger. In 1940, he wrote: 'Rejected the isms and discarded the art of the nineteenth century, the reference for our century will undoubtedly be the painting of the seventeenth century, whose greatness lies in the fact that the artist maintains an attitude of "service" to the themes proposed by the spirit'³⁰. Luis González Robles, the official commissioner of the regime, begins to identify the work of Tàpies with the essential characteristics of 'Spanishness': 'an ethical attitude towards life and a mystical vision of the world, the aridity and austerity of the lands of Spain and the realism, the textures of the earth, the dark colours and the faint hues of the Spanish artistic tradition'.³¹ Simultaneously, the informalist critics unfold a whole range of assumptions by which the new style rises thanks to its counter-modernity, its existential anti-utilitarianism in the wake of the Spanish tradition. For example, Alexandre Cirici already valued the appearance in 1948 of the Catalan post-surrealist group *Dau al Set* for its 'conservative and anti-modernity values', since 'they fight against the systematic destruction of the spirit that occurred in western Europe, during centuries of Renaissance pedantry, scientific progressivism, Caesarism, and utilitarianism'.³² Here reappears the old *motto* of Ortega, Unamuno, and Chueca Goitia on the ability of the Spanish baroque culture to transgress the rationalist order of the pagan Renaissance, recovering the lost potentialities of a medieval mysticism that can combine unity, transcendence, and verticality.³³ In 1957, Joan Teixidor, who was also an art critic, pointed out

²⁹The lecture of Joaquín Ruiz Giménez, entitled 'Art and Politics; Relations between Art and State', was reproduced in *El correo literario*, year II, No. 34–35, Madrid, 1 November 1951, p. 1.

³⁰Díaz Sánchez (1998): 56

³¹Borja-Villel (1988): 203

³²CIRICI PELLICER, Alexandre (1951): 'Dau al Set', *Vint-i-dos [Ariel]*, February 1951, p. 60; quoted in Selles (2007): 75

³³See Ortega y Gasset (1911), Chueca Goitia (1947)

that informalism merged with the baroque ‘when it tears and contorts the serene surfaces of the Renaissance, to introduce this crack of anguish and doubt that the “other art” is now trying to reproduce again as a warning to men’.³⁴ The abstract avant-garde then recovered the traces of the Golden Age tradition to demonstrate the validity of that myth when it comes to questioning pre-war modernity. In 1959, the painter Rafael Canogar attributed to abstract painting the concrete function of ‘finding again the true essences of the Spanish painting of all times’³⁵; two years earlier, the artist Antonio Saura had also argued that informalism was ‘a true asceticism of colour and expression, of telluric violence, under forms of cosmic and baroque synthesis’, which fully coincided with the publications of the ICH, for whom informalism was ‘the Spanish tradition of austerity, tenebrism, mysticism, and expressiveness of the seventeenth century’.³⁶

THE BAROQUE AS A CONCLUSION

There are numerous references to the baroque during this period. We cannot present here even a minor part of those references that appeared in magazines, newspapers, catalogues, and academic books. To summarise, and as a sort of culmination of that whole journey, it is worth recalling the content of number 57 of the magazine *Papeles de Son Armadans*, published in 1960 and dedicated exclusively to the work of Antoni Tàpies.³⁷ The magazine was a literary and graphic project promoted since 1956 by the writer and later Nobel Prize winner Camilo José Cela in Palma de Mallorca, subsidised by the family of the francoist banker Juan March, and which immediately became one of the main intellectual art references at the time. The issue on Tàpies, in which important national and international figures participated, was the most orderly effort to situate the Catalan artist as the heir of a long tradition of Spanish arts. Cela, the editor, was responsible for connecting the universe of Tàpies with that of Menéndez Pidal, Azorín, and Picasso. The critic Alexandre Cirici situated Tàpies within the great Spanish baroque tradition but also within the

³⁴Teixidor (1957): 44

³⁵Canogar (1959): 70

³⁶Saura (1957): 52

³⁷*Papeles de Son Armadans*, monographic about Antoni Tàpies, Madrid-Palma de Mallorca, No. LVII, 1960

Catalan Romanesque-gothic tradition, in romanticism and in existentialism, following the ahistorical premises of the baroque established by Eugenio d'Ors.³⁸ Vicente Aguilera Cerni, Udo Kultermann, Friedrich Bayl, and Juan Antonio Gaya Nuño also situated Tàpies in the wake of the seventeenth-century art. Gaya Nuño even argued that the artist's baroque ancestry was such that it was not even possible to give another name to the style in which he painted: 'Three hundred years ago, pessimism used skulls and putrefactions. Now, he uses parietal surfaces, also in putrefaction. So, there is not much reason to mention any other art in relation to Tàpies' painting.' Kultermann, on the other hand, perceived his work as the necessary brake on superficiality and anecdotism.

This narrative of transcendence, vocation, and tradition acquired a progressive international homologation. James J. Sweeney, director of the Guggenheim Museum, stated in 1960 that 'the Spanish pictorial prodigy consists of the fact that when the abstract is becoming stagnant or exhausted within the founding or pioneering countries due to a lack of new talents, Spain produces them profusely thanks to the tradition that accompanies them'.³⁹ Simultaneously, Frank O'Hara of MOMA declared that the quintessence of Spanish informalist painting lay in its direct connection with the artistic tradition of the baroque.⁴⁰ The British critic Paul Grinke, while analysing Tàpies' exhibition at the ICA in London in 1965, alluded to the artist's concern with realist putrefaction, something 'essentially Spanish' that was associated with the tradition of the seventeenth century. Similar texts can be found everywhere, and we will not dedicate more attention to them now. Nor is it difficult to trace numerous opinions in European and American circles that were suspicious of these historicist references by abstract artists, and wondered to what extent all those works were not the result of some form of institutional propaganda or tourism marketing.⁴¹ Thus, we will not elaborate further.

However, why the baroque? In previous works, we have already analysed the tremendous influence of the baroque narrative in the cultural construction of Spanishness and *Hispanidad*.⁴² The baroque, not so much as a style, but as a visual and linguistic politics of memory—what we have

³⁸ See d'Ors (2002)

³⁹ Tusell (2002): 50

⁴⁰ O'hara (1960)

⁴¹ Marzo (2007)

⁴² Marzo (2010a)

called the baroque effect in other works⁴³—will become the main argument to support a counter-modern discourse and thus link it to the essences of the nation. By considering the baroque as a meta-style, that is, a project that opposes humanism to the very positivist sequence of the history of art, Francoism would succeed in bringing various artistic programmes together. Therefore, the baroque tradition, thanks to slight tactical differences of appreciation, would serve both to build imperialist fanfares, such as the Basilica of the Holy Cross of the Valley of the Fallen, and to combine the existentialist narratives that would give rise to Informalism as early as the 1950s.

The nationalisation of the informalist avant-garde can only be understood, therefore, in the historical commitment that the regime and the artists assumed to provide themselves—each faction with rather different objectives—a common ground in which to structure culture and tradition as a solution to the problems of representativeness and representability of what was absent in the country. Tradition was exhibited by artists as a competent source of legitimacy against the lack of freedom, and as a form of survival in an ecosystem that was opposed to modernity and linked to essences; culture, in the hands of the regime, was proposed as a substitute for the political, and as a ground on which to foster a homologous appearance of well-being. There, the national agreement materialised, giving rise to a fertile collaboration that would last almost 15 years, until the new circumstances of mass culture in the 1960s and a greater awareness of the dissident role of creative practices suspended it, opening a path of disagreement by which the national art competence gave rise to greater social competence.

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